

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill, the Claire Collier Social Security Disability Insurance Fairness Act, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3839

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Claire Collier Social Security Disability Insurance Fairness Act”.

SEC. 2. EXCEPTION FROM 20/40 REQUIREMENT FOR DISABILITY INSURANCE BENEFITS FOR INDIVIDUALS SUFFERING FROM A COVERED TERMINAL DISEASE.

(a) EXCEPTION FROM RECENT WORK REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 223(c)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 423(c)(1)) is amended in the flush matter following subparagraph (B)(iii) by inserting “or suffering from a covered terminal disease” after “216(i)(1)”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 216(i)(3) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 416(i)(3)) is amended in the flush matter following subparagraph (B)(iii) by inserting “or suffering from a covered terminal disease” after “paragraph (1)”.

(b) DEFINITION OF COVERED TERMINAL DISEASE.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of Social Security shall issue a proposed rule defining the term “covered terminal disease” for purposes of sections 216(i)(3) and 223(c)(1) of the Social Security Act (as amended by subsection (a)) that shall include (but not be limited to) those diseases that are incurable, progressive, and terminal, including neurodegenerative and neurological diseases that are likely to cause death within a 5-year period of onset.

(c) INTERIM FINAL AND FINAL RULES.—

(1) INTERIM FINAL RULE.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of Social Security shall issue an interim final rule defining the term “covered terminal disease” in accordance with the requirements of subsection (b) and shall provide for a period of public comments on such rule.

(2) FINAL RULE.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of Social Security shall issue a final rule defining the term “covered terminal disease” in accordance with the requirements of subsection (b) and consideration of any public comments received during the period required under paragraph (1).

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act and shall apply to any applications for disability insurance benefits under title II of the Social Security Act that are pending or filed on or after that date.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 548—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE NEED FOR THE UNITED STATES AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO TAKE CERTAIN ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE HOSTILITIES BETWEEN HEZBOLLAH AND ISRAEL

Mr. DODD (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. SUNUNU, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 548

Whereas, on June 12, 2000, the Government of Lebanon advised the United Nations that it would consider deploying its armed forces throughout southern Lebanon following confirmation by the United Nations Secretary-General that the Government of Israel had fully withdrawn its armed forces from that country in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 425 (1978);

Whereas, on June 16, 2000, the United Nations Security Council endorsed the Secretary-General's conclusion that Israel had withdrawn all of its forces from Lebanon in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 425;

Whereas, notwithstanding the reservations of both Israel and Lebanon regarding the final line determining what constitutes an Israeli withdrawal in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 425, the governments of both countries confirmed that establishing the identifying line was the sole responsibility of the United Nations, and that they would respect the line that the United Nations identified;

Whereas Hezbollah remains an armed terrorist presence in Lebanon and continues to receive material and political support from the Governments of Syria and Iran;

Whereas, as affirmed in Public Law 108-175, the Governments of Syria and Iran have significant influence over Hezbollah;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 (2004) calls for the withdrawal of all foreign forces and the dismantlement of all independent militias in Lebanon;

Whereas the international community has provided insufficient encouragement and resources to the Government of Lebanon to enable the Government to comply with the relevant provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559;

Whereas Hezbollah launched an unprovoked attack against Israel on July 12, 2006, killing 7 Israeli soldiers and taking 2 soldiers hostage, its fifth provocative act against Israel since the summer of 2005;

Whereas the Government of Israel, as reaffirmed in S. Res. 534, has the right to defend itself and to take appropriate action to deter aggression by terrorist groups and their state sponsors;

Whereas fighting between Israel and Hezbollah to date has caused significant damage to Lebanon's and Israel's infrastructures that will necessitate the expenditure of significant sums to rebuild;

Whereas more than 400 citizens of Israel and Lebanon have already lost their lives in the ongoing conflict;

Whereas over 14,000 United States citizens have been evacuated from Lebanon at a cost of over \$60,000,000;

Whereas more than 1,000,000 Israelis living in northern Israel are under threat of Hezbollah rockets;

Whereas more than 700,000 Lebanese civilians have been displaced by the fighting, and the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator is seeking more than \$170,000,000 in donations from international donors to pay for food, medicine, water, and sanitation services over the next 3 months;

Whereas the United States Government has pledged \$30,000,000 in short-term humanitarian assistance to address the humanitarian crisis in Lebanon;

Whereas the fragile democracy of Lebanon is in jeopardy of collapsing without significant international support to address the humanitarian crisis in the country and to strengthen the capacity of the army and security forces of the Government of Lebanon to gain effective control of all territory in Lebanon; and

Whereas continued fighting between Hezbollah and Israel is a threat to the peace and security of the peoples of Israel and Lebanon:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Governments of Syria and Iran should—

(A) end all material and logistical support for Hezbollah, including attempts to replenish Hezbollah's supply of weapons; and

(B) use their significant influence over Hezbollah to disarm the group and release all kidnapped prisoners;

(2) the United States Government and the international community must work urgently with the Governments of Israel and Lebanon—

(A) to attain a cessation in the hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel based on—

(i) effectuating the safe return of Israeli soldiers held in Lebanon;

(ii) the disarmament of Hezbollah, the removal of all Hezbollah forces from southern Lebanon, and the replacement of those forces with army and security forces of the Government of Lebanon; and

(iii) reaching an agreement to fully implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 and to create and deploy an international stabilization force with a clear mandate to enforce a permanent ceasefire;

(B) to organize an international donors conference to solicit and ensure the provision of international resources for the reconstruction of roads, bridges, hospitals, electrical and communications systems, and other civilian infrastructure damaged or destroyed in Lebanon during the hostilities;

(C) to remain engaged to promote sustainable peace and security for Israel and Lebanon and the greater Middle East; and

(D) to assist the Government of Lebanon on its path to democracy by promoting necessary internal political reforms; and

(3) the territorial integrity, sovereignty, unity, and political independence of Lebanon should be strongly supported.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I send to the desk a resolution about the current outbreak of violence in Israel and Lebanon. I do so for myself, Senators LEVIN, SUNUNU, STABENOW, CHAFEE, and KENNEDY. I know that all of us here want to see a peaceful conclusion to the current situation—peace for Israelis and for Lebanese. The tragic deaths of 57 Lebanese civilians—37 of them children—in the village of Qana on Sunday highlight the urgency for doing so.

This resolution would express the sense of the Senate that the United

States and international community must work urgently with the Governments of Israel and Lebanon to achieve the following six goals: attaining a cessation in the hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel; effectuating the safe return of Israeli soldiers held in Lebanon; disarming Hezbollah, removing Hezbollah forces from southern Lebanon, and replacing those forces with Lebanese army and security forces; reaching agreement to create and deploy an international stabilization force with a robust mandate to enforce a permanent ceasefire and to fully implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559; organizing an international donors conference to solicit and ensure the provision of international resources for the reconstruction of Lebanon; and ensuring that all parties remain engaged to promote peace and security for Israel and Lebanon and the greater Middle East.

I believe that it is important to mention a few points up front. As my colleagues know, the current situation began when two Israeli soldiers were kidnapped by Hezbollah, a terrorist organization that is based in Lebanon but supported by Syria and Iran.

These soldiers were kidnapped from Israeli soil, and during those kidnapping operations, innocent Israelis were killed, and some northern Israeli cities were shelled with rockets.

These facts are very important to remember as we consider the current situation because despite any other frustrations that some people might have with the derailed Israeli-Palestinian peace process, it wasn't Israeli actions which started the cycle of the current bloody situation in which more than 400 Israelis and Lebanese have died.

I would also say unequivocally that I believe that Israel is currently acting in self-defense as a response to attacks on its soil and the kidnapping of its citizens. No country that experienced similar attacks would do anything less—certainly not the United States. And I support fully Israel's right to defend its borders and its citizens.

All violent confrontations, however, must eventually come to an end—including this one. I think what we are all hoping—Americans, Israelis, Lebanese—is that a resolution of this flare-up will come quickly and without any additional loss of innocent civilians in Lebanon or Israel, so that a climate conducive to tackling the many complex problems confronting the region can exist. Clearly, that climate does not exist at the moment while fighting is ongoing.

However, long-term peace necessitates certain actions. First, I believe that an international stabilization force with real teeth to act against Hezbollah militia and any other terrorist elements will eventually need to be deployed in southern Lebanon. On this point, we must learn from the failures of the current United Nations Stabilization Force in Lebanon, UNIFIL, and give any future force the size and mandate to actually fulfill its mission.

Second, long-term peace will require full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559, which calls on the Lebanese Army to deploy to protect the southern border, as well as for the disarmament of Hezbollah.

Long-term peace will also require Israel to cease its attacks in Lebanon, consistent with the Lebanese Government and international community's ability and willingness to stop terrorist elements from launching attacks on Israel. I would remind my colleagues that Israel withdrew voluntarily from Lebanon in 2000—a move that was recognized by the United Nations Secretary General and Security Council as fulfilling completely the terms of U.N. Security Council Resolution 425. To that end, I doubt very much whether Israel would like to stay in Lebanon even one day longer than is absolutely necessary to stop the terror and return Israeli citizens to safety.

My belief in the need for a quick cessation of hostilities is rooted in my concern that the current violence between Israel and Hezbollah is greatly strengthening the hands of Iran and Syria. This is true especially with respect to Iran, which wants to divert international attention away from its nuclear program as well as position itself as the leader of the Arab Muslim world.

Indeed, as the body counts rise, we are seeing the gulf between moderate Arab regimes and their citizens widen dramatically. At the same time, Iran's position as the main backer of Hezbollah is giving it a newfound legitimacy in the eyes of many Arabs. It is critical that we avoid these outcomes because current Iranian nuclear and regional ambitions pose a threat to Israel, to moderate Arab regimes, to the United States, and to the international community alike.

Moreover, long-term peace will be impossible unless the international community gets both Iran and Syria to shut off and cut off Hezbollah and other terrorist groups. By "shut off," I mean that Iran and Syria must send a clear signal to Hezbollah to stop its violent terrorist attacks against Israel. By "cut off," I mean that these countries must stop financing, supplying, and providing safe haven to terrorist groups and their operatives. The international community must also send a strong message to Iran and Syria that they need to stop preventing Lebanon from deploying its army to disarm Hezbollah and protect the border.

But the current situation will not begin to wind down unless, first and foremost, the Israeli hostages are released unharmed.

After that, the short-term goals should be the deployment of an international stabilization force with real teeth in the south and some kind of international monitoring of land, sea, and air crossings to ensure that Hezbollah will not be rearmed by Syria and Iran.

The long-term goals are obviously that U.N. Security Council Resolution

1559 is fully implemented. Full implementation of that resolution means, among other things, that an effective Lebanese Army is deployed along that country's southern border and that Hezbollah is disarmed.

It is quite apparent that after decades of operational and financial support from Syria, and especially Iran, Hezbollah's military wing is currently too strong for the relatively weak Lebanese Government to deal with. So to the extent that Israeli actions weaken Hezbollah's capabilities, they also create the possibility of strengthening the Lebanese Government's hand to reign in militias and terrorists. But there might be a point of diminishing returns where Hezbollah is somewhat weakened while Iran and Syria are greatly strengthened—an outcome that it is essential to avoid. Hopefully, the combination of the current attacks against Hezbollah, a quick cessation of hostilities, and the immediate deployment—concurrent with the end of hostilities—of an international force with real teeth will make that the case.

I realize that there are many voices in the Arab world who accuse the U.S. of ignoring the plight of the innocent Lebanese citizens who have been caught in the crossfire because Hezbollah militants have shamefully hidden themselves and their weapons among the civilian population. I do not believe that this is the case. And I think that the U.S. could help to prove this by organizing an international donors' conference as quickly as possible to assist the Lebanese in rebuilding their country.

As I said before, I think we in Congress all share a desire to see peace in the Middle East. I would hope that once all of the steps I have talked about today come into place that the United States would take a lead role in bringing about that peace because U.S. leadership, and our active and high-level engagement, have always been an essential part of the Middle East peace process.

I believe that this resolution will send a strong signal that the world needs to support the Lebanese people, respect Israel's right to defend itself, and be tough with Hezbollah, Iran, and Syria. These are the necessary signals that we need to send in order for there to truly be hope at the end of this tunnel. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I ask that the text of the resolution be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

SENATE RESOLUTION 549—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING MODERN-DAY SLAVERY

Mr. SANTORUM (for himself, Mr. PRYOR, and Mrs. DOLE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations: